

Michael A. Patterson (incumbent)

Candidate for Rochester City Council

Northeast District

- Name one issue on which you disagree with the current administration and why.

I am opposed to dynamic staffing for the Fire Department. I believe that it is a solution in search of a problem.

- What is the most important issue facing your district, and what is a specific proposal or action you propose to address it?

There are multiple issues facing the North East District. There is a lack of employment in the North East, and I have worked with the new owners of the Hawkeye plant to return employment to the North East. There is a great deal of crime and drug dealing in the North East, and I'm working with neighbors and the police to identify problem areas and direct resources to solve the problem. There is a profound lack of affordable housing in the North East, and I'm working with developers and neighbors to bring new affordable housing online. There are very few programs that assist working and poor folks in becoming homeowners, and I have attracted a national mortgage provider to the City of Rochester and their office is on North Clinton Ave. The organization's name is NACA, and they just concluded a four-day homeownership event Sunday, June 16, at the Convention Center. For me one of the great take-aways from the event was when a woman closed on a home on Wilkins St. She chose to purchase the home she had been renting. Her rent was \$900/month. Her mortgage is \$600/month.

- Please identify one area in the city budget where you think the city should commit more resources than is currently proposed and why.

I think we need to look into committing more resources in multiple areas. The first three are police, fire, and recreation. I often hear complaints from residents about police response time. It may be time to look at creating smaller car beats. Our Fire Department is great, but I feel that a collaborative conversation with those who represent the rank and file would be helpful in moving our Fire Department to the next level. Recreation has solid leadership that is moving it beyond bouncing balls while embracing the notion that bouncing balls are important as is play in general. To pay for these expanded services we may have to look at using more of our levy specifically for these purposes, and I propose we think about a public safety and youth fund. There is time between the passage of the 2019-20 budget to contemplate and consider this prior to the passage of 2020-21 budget. Finally, I am an advocate for affordable housing and always believe that we can and should spend more money on affordable housing.

- What policies would you pursue to address housing affordability, evictions and/or landlord-tenant relations in your district?

I have advocated for, and continue to advocate for affordable housing not just in the North East District but across the entire City of Rochester. In my short time in office multiple developments have come online and more are in the pipeline. I enticed an affordable housing mortgage provider to open an office in the City in the North East. With the sweeping change in tenant protections recently signed into law, I look forward to working with my colleagues on Council to fund a vacancy study to determine what additional protections may be legally provided to the citizens of Rochester.

- Will you vote for the Police Accountability Board as proposed in November – why or why not?

As a current member of Council I was one of the co-sponsors of the PAB and I have voted for it throughout the process. I will support the legislation through the referendum process also. There is currently very little faith in the current process. Hopefully this change will create an opportunity to clearly celebrate quality policing while at the same time removing officers unfit for the job from the ranks. This referendum will create a tremendous opportunity for debate and conversation and this community will be better for having had this conversation.

- Do you support Mayor Warren's push for a referendum calling for removal of the elected school board in favor of a state takeover of RCSD/appointed board, and why?

I support the referendum submitted by the Mayor. Let me be clear. No mere referendum submitted by the Mayor and passed by City Council will remove the elected Commissioners of the Rochester City School District. All who can, should vote for RCSD Commissioners in the upcoming primary and later in the general election. What this referendum will do is provide this community and NYS Senate and NYS Assembly members with a clear understanding of what the PEOPLE of the City of Rochester want. Hopefully it will definitely give a clear direction as to whether this community is committed to the current incremental approach or if it wants something more radical. Or it won't and that is a message also. Regardless, there will be debate between the passage of this item by Council and the general election in November. We will all benefit from the conversation.

- What current policy or practice of city government would you seek to change if (re)elected, and why?

I have a concern about our boards and commissions processes. Too often it looks to residents like it's a done deal and the hearings are a mere formality. I believe that going forward calls for support or opposition from the community

should be a requirement before an item is submitted for board review.